

ObamaCare. All it does is shut down the government and keep ObamaCare funded. And none of us want that. That would be the results of filibustering.

Four years ago every Democrat voted for this bill and had the excuse that they did not know how it would turn out. Well, they do not have that excuse now. I think we deserve to know where they stand now. Four years ago every Senate Democrat worked to jam this bill through the Senate, over the loud objections of their constituents. As the implementation of this law proceeds, their constituents remain just as angry about it, and it is important for their Senators to go on record once again. We are giving them a do-over—a second chance, if you will. Do they stand with the people of their States, who do not want this law to be implemented, or did they double down on this failed experiment? That is the question.

Everybody knows where Republicans stand on this issue. We may be divided on some things. We may not always agree on tactics. But on the question of repealing ObamaCare, we are totally united.

This law should be defunded. That is what the House bill does. That is why I plan to support it. But if we are going to repeal ObamaCare, we are going to need some Democratic votes to do that. That is the only plan I have seen in this debate that will actually get us to our common goal of undoing the law.

For the sake of our constituents, we need to unite to achieve it. So this morning I would like to make a plea to our friends on the other side: Join us in taking it off the books and replacing it with the kind of commonsense, step-by-step reforms that lower costs and that Americans will actually embrace. I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:15 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak, though the minority has this first half, and ask the 10 minutes I speak be taken off the majority time at the end of morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBAMACARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened closely to the statement made by

Senator McCONNELL of Kentucky, the Republican Senate leader. I applaud him and other Senators who have spoken out against the so-called filibuster that has been initiated by the Senator from Texas and at least one other Senator.

It is not technically a filibuster, as Senator REID said, but the object is to slow down the business of the Senate and it is somewhat similar to a filibuster. We are going to have that occur today when Senator CRUZ takes the floor this afternoon to state his position that we should shut down the government if we fund ObamaCare.

That, to me, is an irresponsible position. It is irresponsible because the Senators who support the House position are playing high stakes poker with other people's money. To shut down the government is disastrous, not only for hundreds of thousands of Federal employees who do important work to keep America safe and to keep us a leading nation on the economy but also because it is at the expense of American jobs.

When Senator REID, the Democratic leader, came to the floor and read a statement from the Business Roundtable, he was reading from the strongest business group that usually, without fail, supports Republicans. That group put out a statement yesterday—the Business Roundtable, the leading business executives in our country—that to shut down the government or to fail to extend the debt ceiling is devastating to our economy. The words they used were “calamitous” and “catastrophic.” That is how they described the Republican strategy, which Senator CRUZ and others are bringing to the floor of the Senate today—catastrophic, calamitous.

Why in the world would we have the self-imposed crisis created by the threats of the House Republicans on the floor of the Senate today? They are entitled to a debate. They are entitled to state their position. That is their right as Senators representing their States. But they are not entitled to damage our economy and hurt innocent people and shut down the government. That is a petulant political position.

What we need to do is take a more positive approach to governing this country. Senator McCONNELL also talked about ObamaCare, known as the health care reform bill, one of the most important bills the Senate has passed in modern times and one I was proud to support.

What he is basically calling for is the repeal of ObamaCare. What the Republicans are calling for is to repeal, for example, that provision in ObamaCare which says that health insurance companies cannot discriminate against people with preexisting conditions. If you happen to be in a family with a child who has diabetes, it may be impossible for you to buy health insurance under the old law. Under ObamaCare, your family cannot be dis-

criminated against. The Republicans want to eliminate that provision of ObamaCare when they call for abolishing that program.

Secondly, when they defund and eliminate ObamaCare, they are going to change that provision which guarantees there will be no limits on our health insurance policy coverage. Who knows what tomorrow's diagnosis will bring, what bills it will bring our family. But some health insurance policies have a limit on what they pay. When that limit is reached, people face bankruptcy and worse. ObamaCare stops that from happening. The Republicans want to repeal that.

ObamaCare also says that if your young son or daughter, fresh out of college, is looking for a job and has not found one, they can stay on your family health insurance plan until age 26. The Republicans want to repeal that, leaving more and more young people—millions across America—vulnerable without the protection of health insurance.

When it comes to Medicare prescription Part D, seniors, because of the so-called doughnut hole, were paying sums out of their own savings, their meager savings, and out of their own pockets, for prescription drugs. ObamaCare fills that doughnut hole and gives those seniors more peace of mind when it comes to prescription drugs. The Republicans want to repeal that help for our senior citizens.

Finally, they want to repeal the insurance exchanges. Today, every Member of Congress who uses the health insurance available to us as Senators and Congressman is part of the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program. Each year Senators, Republicans and Democrats, have an opportunity under an insurance exchange to pick the plan best for their family. That privilege is something we appreciate and want to make available for everyone across America. That is what ObamaCare does. The Republicans want to repeal it. Republican Senators want to keep using the insurance exchange for their families and their benefit. They do not want to extend to it our families across America. That is what repeal of ObamaCare would do.

Those are the specifics. For Senator McCONNELL to come to the floor and challenge those of us who voted for ObamaCare as to whether we still stand by it, I do. Is it perfect? Of course not. There are changes that can be made to this law and should be made but in a constructive and positive fashion. This is not just about the peace of mind of people, families and businesses and others when it comes to health insurance, it is about our deficit. If we took the Republican approach of doing nothing when it comes to the cost of health care, sadly, we are condemning ourselves to deficits as far as the eye can see.

Sixty percent of our deficits and looming national debt relates to the increased cost of health care. If we took